



Who to Contact

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Summary of Alternatives

Alternative #1:

Administration Proposal - In August 1998, the Secretary of the Interior, in coordination with the Council on Environmental Quality and the Environmental Protection Agency, presented an Administration Proposal to provide the Colorado Ute Tribes an assured water supply in satisfaction of their water rights as determined by the Colorado Ute Indians Water Rights Settlement Act of 1988. The Administration Proposal also allowed for water to be made available for identified municipal and industrial (M&I) water needs in the project area. The Administration Proposal, which incorporated concepts developed during the Romer-Schoettler process, is designed to satisfy tribal water rights claims while safeguarding non-Indian water rights. The proposal includes a defined number of facilities centering around a down-sized storage facility limited to M&I water uses, i.e., an off-stream reservoir at Ridges Basin with a capacity of approximately 90,000 acre-feet (af), a pumping plant, and a reservoir inlet conduit, all designed to provide for an average yearly depletion of 57,100 af. The depletion is consistent with the 1996 Biological Opinion issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Administration Proposal also includes a non-structural element which would establish and utilize a \$40 million water acquisition fund which the Colorado Ute Tribes could use to acquire water rights on a willing buyer/seller basis in an amount sufficient to allow the Tribes approximately 13,000 af per year of depletion in addition to the depletions available from the reservoir.

Alternative #2:

Administration Proposal with Recreation Element Added - This alternative, added at the request of the State of Colorado, would satisfy the same purpose and need and entail the same facilities as the Administration Proposal. A fishery conservation pool of approximately 30,000 af would be added, increasing the overall reservoir size to approximately 120,000 af, and recreation facilities could also be included to provide for such activities as camping, boating, picnicking, etc. The non-structural component of the Administration Proposal would also apply to this alternative.

Alternative #3:

Administration Proposal with San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program Added - This alternative includes the same facilities as the Administration Proposal. However, the reservoir size would be increased to approximately 105,000 af to offset the need to curtail pumping from the Animas River during selected spring runoff periods (around June 1) in order to help achieve flows in the San Juan River as specified in the flow recommendations for the San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program (SJRBRIP). The non-structural component of the Administration Proposal would also apply to this alternative.

Alternative #4:

Administration Proposal with San Juan River Basin Recovery Implementation Program and Recreation Elements Added - This alternative includes the same facilities as the Administration Proposal but also includes the fishery conservation pool element of Alternative 2 and the restricted pumping element of Alternative 3. The total reservoir size would be approximately 135,000 af.

Alternative #5:

Animas - La Plata Reconciliation Plan - This alternative represents a structural alternative that was developed during the Romer-Schoettler process. Under this plan, the reservoir at Ridges Basin would have a storage capacity of approximately 260,000 af to allow for future M&I and irrigation storage needs and a smaller capacity pumping plant.

Alternative #6:

Animas River Citizens' Coalition Conceptual Alternative - This alternative represents a non-structural proposal developed during the Romer-Schoettler process. The plan consists of two primary elements: 1) the creation of a fund for the purchase of water rights and lands within the vicinity of the Southern Ute and Ute Mountain Ute Indian Reservations, and 2) the acquisition of water available in the future from existing projects or through expansion of selected exist-